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#15
MOONSTONE
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THE PHANTOM™



Mike Bullock
Carlos Magno

THE PHANTOM

created by LEE FALK

"WALKER'S LINE"
PART TWO OF TWO

WRITTEN BY **MIKE BULLOCK**

ILLUSTRATED BY **CARLOS MAGNO**

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COVER BY **JOE PRADO, CARLOS MAGNO & ROD REIS**

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PHANTOM CONSULTANT
ED RHOADES

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Kathleen O'Brien - web master

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LEAVE THAT
FOOL-- HE'S
DONE.

WHAT
A WHACKER! WHO
WEARS PURPLE TIGHTS?
HE LOOKS LIKE SOME
KINDA *FREAKY* BALLET
DANCER.

COME HERE,
CHICKIE! WE'RE
NOT DONE WITH
YOU YET.

NO!
GET AWAY!



"I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* HE HIT ME WITH, BUT I DID KNOW THE RED IN MY VISION WAS *MOSTLY* MY OWN BLOOD."

YOU LOOK LIKE A *SWEET* PIECE...



"I LATER FIGURED OUT THE PART THAT WASN'T BLOOD WAS *RAGE*."

GET HER *SHIRT* OFF!



AH!

WHAT *ARE* YOU?

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU NO MEANS...



...NO!



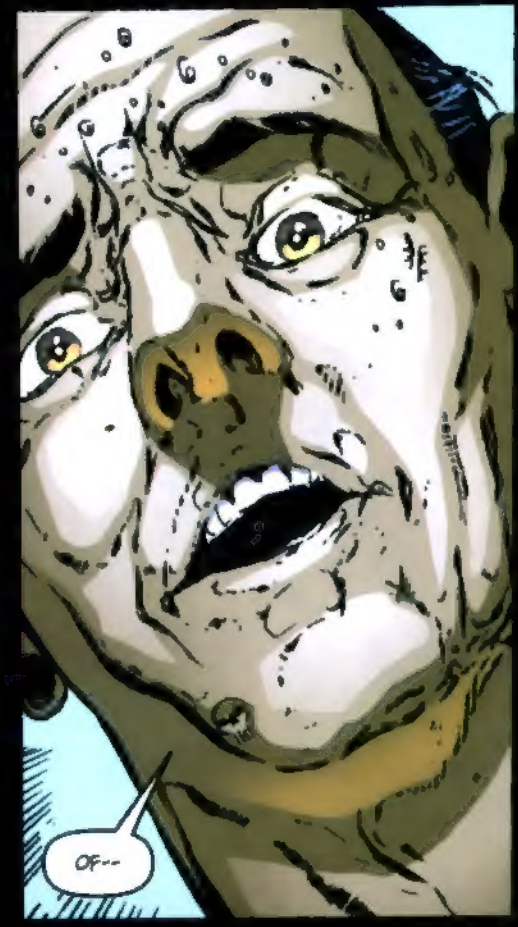
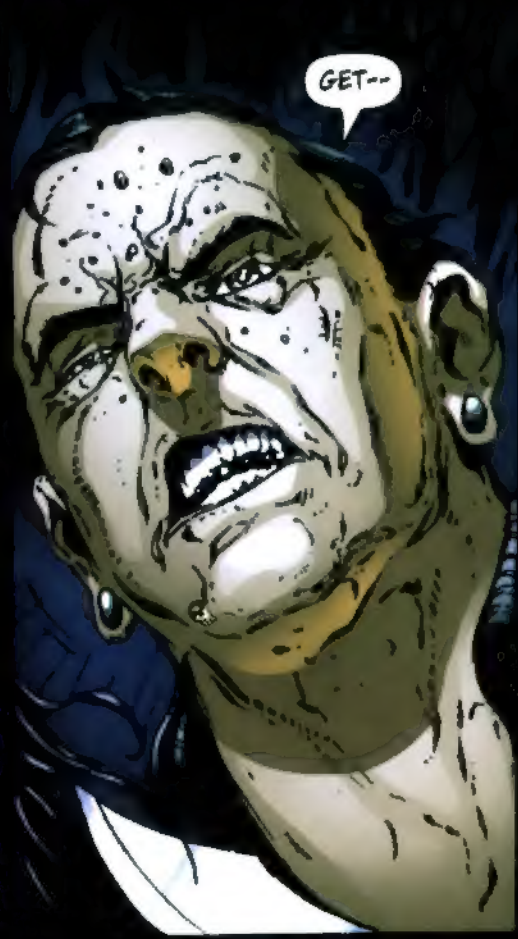
YOU'RE GONNA
PAY FOR THAT,
BARYSHNIKOV.



SEND
ME A
BILL!



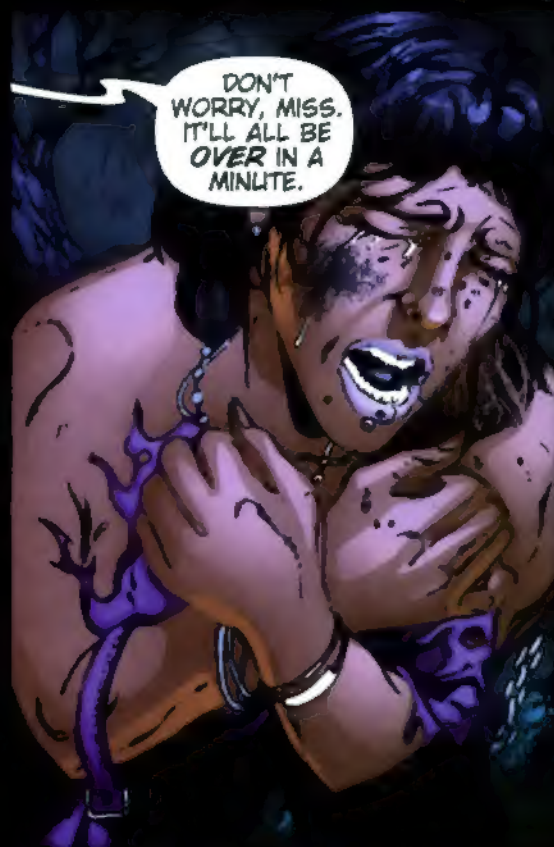
BACK OFF,
DANCER BOY
OR THE GIRL
GETS A NEW
MOUTH.







OH, I'M
GONNA KILL
YOU FOR THAT,
MAN!



DON'T
WORRY, MISS.
IT'LL ALL BE
OVER IN A
MINUTE.

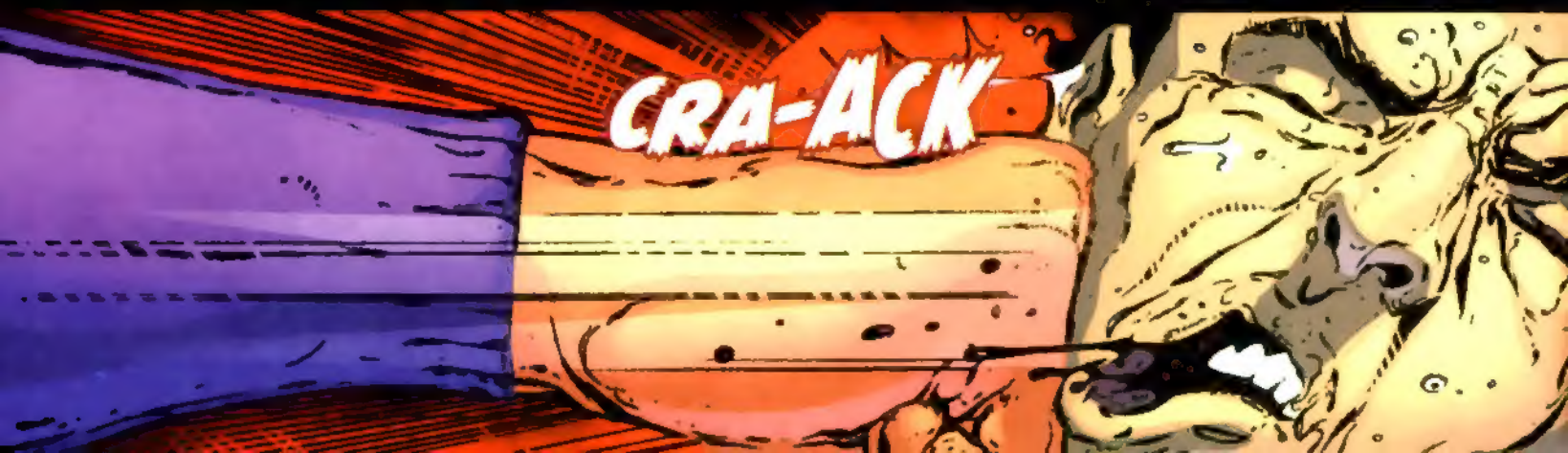


THE ONLY
THING THAT'S
GONNA BE
OVER IS YOUR
LIFE!

RAAAH!



"COMPARED TO THE
PHANTOM, LIGHTING
IS SLOW" -- OLD
JUNGLE SAYING



CRA-ACK



YOU'LL
BE OKAY,
MISS.

Y-YOU
SAVED
ME...



ARE YOU
OKAY?

WH-WHAT
HAPPENED?

"AT THAT POINT, I REALIZED I
WASN'T AS CONCERNED WITH AUNT
BESSIE'S NECKLACE AS I WAS THE
SAFETY OF THESE INNOCENT PEOPLE.

"I'D SPENT MANY YEARS WALKING DOWN
THESE STREETS, ENJOYING THIS PARK. IT
WAS TIME TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE
ELSE COULD ENJOY IT AS WELL."



WEE-000 WEE-000



"THIS GANG WAS LIKE A WEED
TAKING OVER A BEAUTIFUL
GARDEN. IT WAS TIME TO
PULL IT OUT BY ITS ROOTS.

"BUT FIRST, I NEEDED TO GO
CHECK ON AUNT BESSIE."



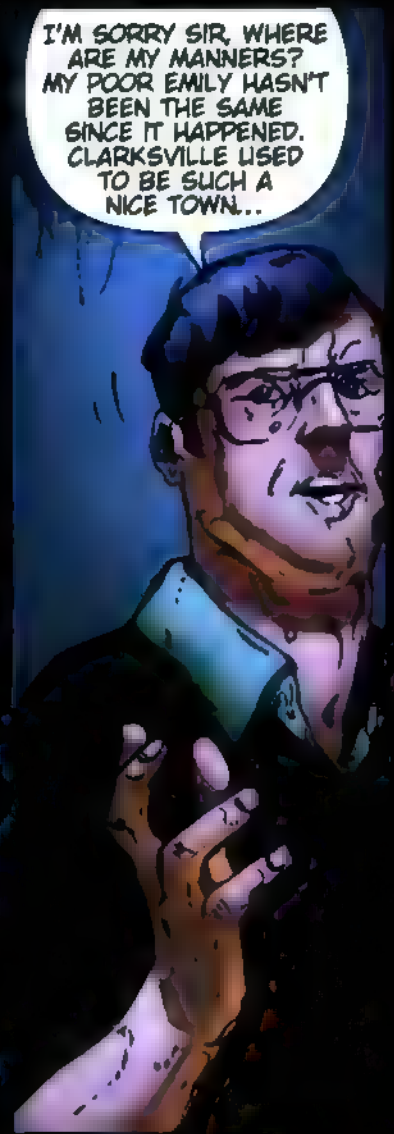
HELLO.



WHY
THE LONG
FACE,
LITTLE
ONE?



I MEAN NO HARM, IS SHE OKAY?



I'M SORRY SIR, WHERE ARE MY MANNERS? MY POOR EMILY HASN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE IT HAPPENED. CLARKSVILLE USED TO BE SUCH A NICE TOWN...



SINCE WHAT HAPPENED? IS SHE ALL RIGHT?

THOSE **BLASTED** GANGS. ALWAYS SHOOTING UP THE PLACE. NEVER PAYING ATTENTION TO SEE IF THERE ARE **INNOCENT** CHILDREN ABOUT...



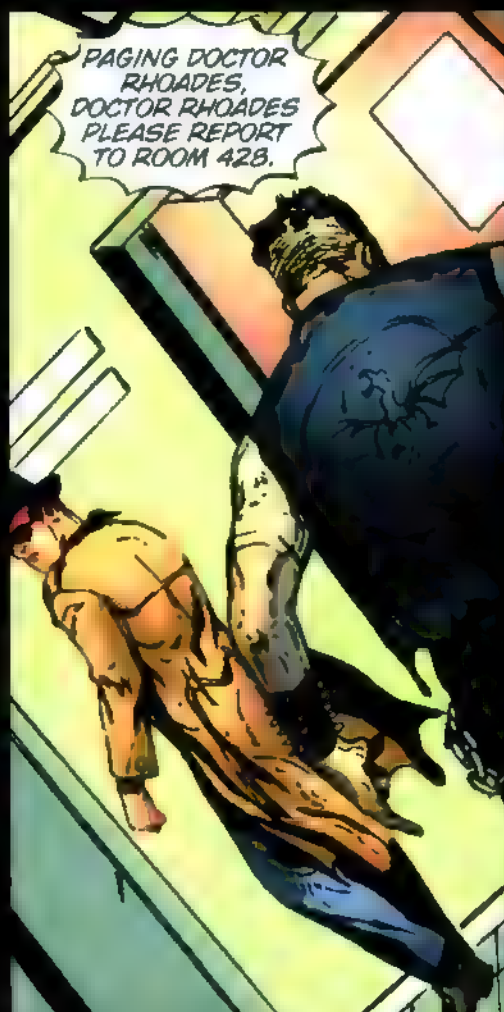
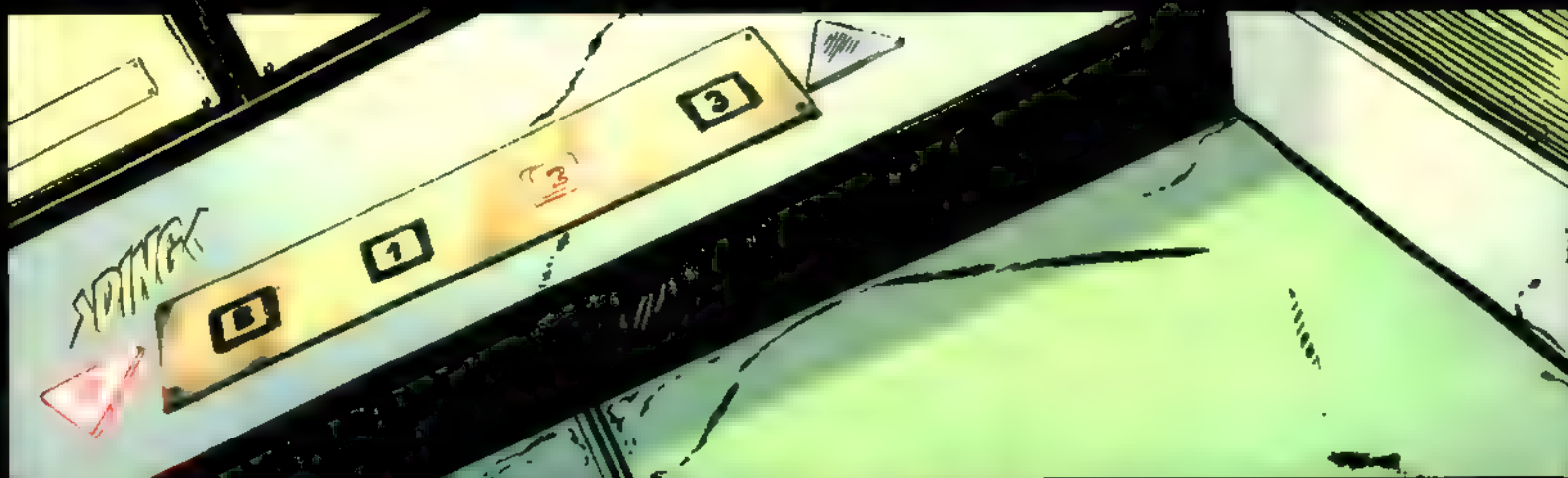
I'M SORRY SIR, WE HAVE TO GO. WE HAVE SOME THINGS TO ATTEND TO...

GOODBYE.



SO DO I...



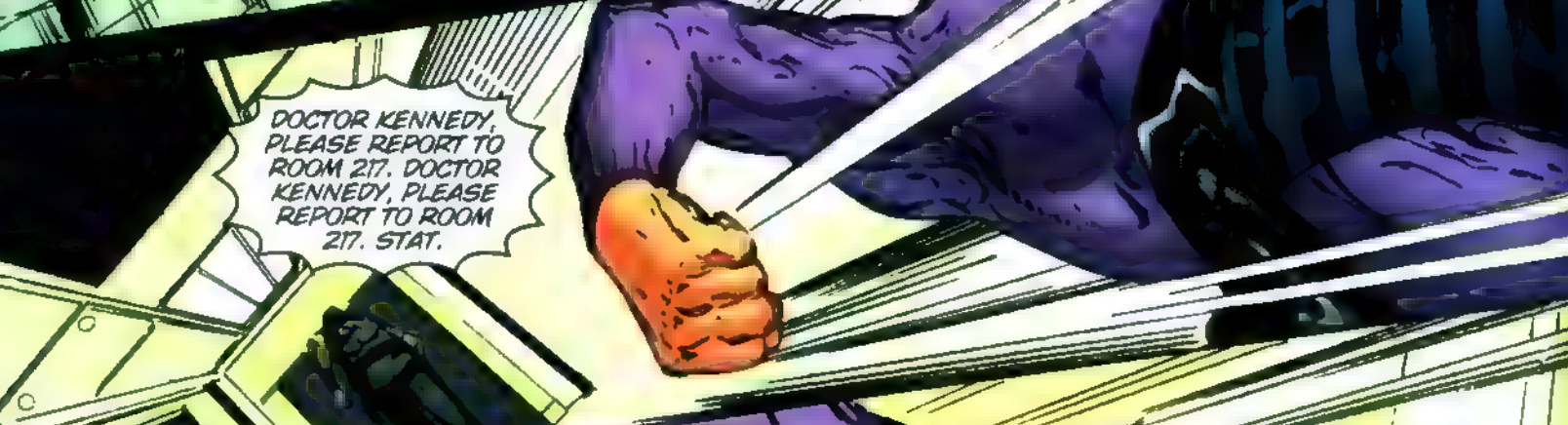




HOW
COULD HE
KNOW?



"ANGRY PHANTOM IS
FEARFUL TO BEHOLD"
--OLD JUNGLE SAYING



DOCTOR KENNEDY,
PLEASE REPORT TO
ROOM 217. DOCTOR
KENNEDY, PLEASE
REPORT TO ROOM
217. STAT.



AAHI

WUZZAT?!



IT'S ABOUT TIME I FINISHED WHAT I STARTED.

...NOW THERE WON'T BE ANYONE TO PLAY EYEWITNESS TO ANYTHING.

SEE YOU IN HELL--



GET
AWAY FROM
HER!

FRRAHHHHH!

-00000FF-

BOOM!

AAAAHH!





I AM THE
GHOST WHO
WALKS.

I
CANNOT
DIE.

YOU AIN'T NO
"GHOST". JUST
SOME WHACKO IN
A PURPLE SUIT.

I'M GONNA CUT
YOU UP, THEN GO BACK UP
STAIRS AND STICK THAT OLD
WOMAN LIKE THE PIG THAT
SHE IS WHILE YOU LAY DOWN
HERE AND BLEED TO
DEATH.

HER SCREAMS
WILL BE THE
LAST THING YOU
EVER HEAR!

I AM THE
GHOST WHO
WALKS...

"NEVER THREATEN
THE PHANTOM"
--OLD JUNGLE
SAYING



"I WAS BEGINNING TO LOSE CONTROL. AND WHILE HIS WORDS PUMMELED ME, THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK OF WAS TAKING HIM OUT OF COMMISSION...FOR GOOD."

THAT'S ALL YOU GOT? AIN'T NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO STOP ME FROM KILLING THAT %@#\$ OLD LADY!

SHUT UP!

YOU KNOW YOU AIN'T GONNA KILL ME, BUT I AM GONNA KILL HER.

SHUT UP!

I MIGHT EVEN HAVE SOME FUN WITH HER BEFORE I SLIT HER THROAT!

SHUT UP!

I HAVEN'T HAD ME SOME OLD LADY IN MONTHS--

BLAM

"THAT'S WHEN IT HAPPENED..."

"YOU KILLED HIM?"

SHUT UP!

ONE MINUTE AGO

"BEFORE I PULLED THAT TRIGGER, I WAS ABOUT AS CONFLICTED AS I'VE EVER BEEN. ONE OF THE PITFALLS OF YOUTH IS LETTING YOUR EMOTIONS CONTROL YOU, INSTEAD OF YOU CONTROLLING THEM.

"AND AT THAT MOMENT, *MY EMOTIONS* WERE IN CONTROL OF ME, FOR SURE.

"BUT IN THAT DARKEST OF TIMES, *EVERYTHING* IT MEANT TO BE CALLED *THE PHANTOM* CAME RUSHING BACK TO ME, TO GUIDE MY HAND.

"THE LEGACY YOUR GRANDFATHER PASSED DOWN TO ME AS HIS FATHER HAD PASSED IT ON TO HIM.

I MIGHT EVEN HAVE SOME FUN WITH HER BEFORE I SLIT HER THROAT!

"THE OATH OF THE SKULL.

SHUT UP!

I HAVEN'T HAD ME SOME OLD LADY IN MONTHS--

SHUT UP!

"AND JUST BEFORE I MADE THE BIGGEST MISTAKE OF MY YOUNG LIFE, I HEARD MY FATHER'S VOICE."

"NO, SON, KILLING IS NOT OUR WAY."

BLAM

Now

YOU
OWE ME
YOUR LIFE.
DON'T
MAKE ME
COLLECT.

DON'T
HURT ME!
FANTASMA!

THE
GHOST...

OATH
OF THE
SKULL...

"I WAS TREMBLING AT
HOW CLOSE I'D COME TO
KILLING HIM. JUST
THINKING ABOUT IT MADE
IT HARD TO KEEP
MY STOMACH DOWN."

HE'S THE
LEADER OF THE
SKULLS GANG, ALL
RIGHT. HE'S LUCKY
WE GOT HERE WHEN
WE DID OR HE'D BE
THE LATEST
MURDER VICTIM IN
CLARKSVILLE.





I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU MANAGED TO GET MY NECKLACE BACK, BUT I'M GRATEFUL NONETHELESS.



THE NURSE SAID SHE CAN GO HOME IN A FEW DAYS. SO, **STOP WORRYING**, YOU LOOK AS PALE AS A GHOST.

I'M SORRY, UNCLE EPHRAIM, I WAS JUST SO AFRAID WE'D LOSE HER.

WELL, WE DIDN'T, EVERYTHING'S FINE NOW. COME ON, LET ME **SHOW YOU** SOMETHING OUT IN THE HALL.



THIS SHOULD SET YOUR MIND AT EASE. IT SEEMS CLARKSVILLE HAS SOME SORT OF GUARDIAN ANGEL LOOKING OUT FOR US NOW.



SO, AFTER MAKING SURE AUNT BESSIE WAS GOING TO BE OKAY, I RETURNED HOME, AND SOON FOUND THE MAN WHO HAD YOUR GRANDFATHER'S GUN BELT. BUT THAT'S ANOTHER STORY.



SO, EVEN AFTER ALL THAT, YOU DIDN'T KILL HIM?

NO, KIT. WHEN I CALMED DOWN ENOUGH TO REFLECT ON THOSE EVENTS, I WAS ASHAMED BY WHAT I'D ALMOST DONE.

BUT I WAS GRATEFUL YOUR GRANDFATHER'S WORDS GUIDED MY HAND AT THE LAST INSTANT.

MURDER DOESN'T FIGHT INJUSTICE-- MURDER **IS** INJUSTICE.

AND WHAT SORT OF EXAMPLE WOULD THAT SET FOR YOU AND YOUR SONS?

THE END.

BEHIND THE MASK

The Phantom's Other Family
by Ed Rhoades

The Phantom's responsibility to fight evil and injustice requires a well-rounded education and life experience. Although learning about fighting and jungle survival from his father is a valuable training for the mantle he must someday wear, it is not enough, so as a young man, the Phantom attends school while living with his mother's family. Keeping this in mind, the choice of the Phantom's wife is important not just for her bloodline, but for her family as well.

The first Phantom's wife was a Spanish princess; the fourth Phantom's wife was the niece of William Shakespeare. Other mates of Phantoms have included a daughter of a maharajah, an Indian princess, a pirate queen, an Italian opera singer, and a sharpshooter Annie Morgan (inspired by famed Phoebe Ann Oakley Mozee).

Lady Maude, the mother of the current Phantom died when he was living with her sister, Sophie. Adjustment to small town life was not an easy one. He was out of place. Jungle bred, his frame of reference made him appear like a savage to his extended family in their civilized setting. His Aunt Sophie and her husband Ephraim had boasted that he was the son of a rich plantation owner and arranged an elaborate reception to welcome their nephew; however, upon his arrival his uncivilized appearance and jungle-bred demeanor embarrassed them in the presence of their friends. Young Kit's uncle decided to spank him as punishment for the incident not knowing the danger he faced with such an act. Guran, an adult pygmy warrior, who was sworn to protect Kit, was prepared to kill Ephraim, and Kit at the age of 12 was already more than the equal of a full-grown man and capable of protecting himself. After running away from his new surroundings, Kit discovered that his Aunt Sophie was concerned about him and he returned to her home.

As their familial bond grew, Kit's aunt and uncle played an important part in the Phantom's development from a headstrong youngster to a mature, thoughtful man. It is reasonable to assume that the formative years he spent in their care were instrumental in transforming youthful stubbornness to mature resolve. As those years passed, his aunt and uncle came to love Kit. During his stay with them, his heroic act of protecting students from a panther and his incredible athletic prowess put their small town on the map and endeared Kit to everyone in the kindly community.

His uncle, who at first viewed Kit with misgivings, later became proud of the fine young man he grew into and carried sincere affection for his nephew.

There are different official accounts of Kit's childhood. The earliest being a Sunday strip beginning in July 1944. It's likely Alfred Bester ghosted this version, while Lee served in the armed forces. In this early plot, young Kit stays with his Aunt Lucy and Uncle Jasper Walker in the town of Centerville. Lee retold the same story with a few changes in another Sunday strip beginning in June 1959. The basic elements are the same, but the setting is the small town of Watertown where he stays with his Aunt Sophie and her husband. Lee's final version appeared in "The Story of the Phantom," a 1972 Avon paperback, in which young Kit resides with his Aunt Bessie and Uncle Ephraim in Clarksville. Yet another very well written account was "The Son of the Phantom" by Dale Robertson, which was based on the first Sunday story and featured art by Wilson McCoy from the original Sunday story "Childhood of the Phantom." When I asked Lee about this, he replied, "I had nothing to do with it. I was in the army."

All are similar in details and characteristics and present Kit's extended family in the same way.

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